

60 REASONS TO SUPPORT NEW YORK'S MEDICAL AID IN DYING ACT

Avery Ross

Because, while we didn't have a lot to say about how we got here, each of us should have autonomy in our decisions about how we leave.

Harlem, New York



Reason #29

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My mother was a nurse, and she wanted my family and I to be prepared for the fact that someday she would die. We used to talk about it at dinner.

She said, 'when I find out I'm sick, I'm going to start sending you pictures.' When she did that, I knew exactly what was going on.

My mother had congestive heart failure. We had the opportunity to celebrate her life, while she was still here, we were able to see the joy on her face before she left us.

My mother made a choice. 'I am going to hospice and I'm going home.' She died in her sleep.

I choose to reframe, and think about the dying process in a positive light, rather than something that is frightening or negative. The conversation about end-of-life options is one that people should have. The option of medical aid in dying ought to be available to those who are able to make that decision. I choose to believe that. That's what I have imparted to my son.

There's no such thing as death, there's just a change in form. We transition. When we came in, we had nothing, no clothes, we had open arms waiting for us. I believe that there are open arms waiting for us on the other side.

I want a party before I die, not after. I'm not interested in being sick, and going through all the procedures, when I get to that point in my life, I know exactly what I'm going to do, and I just pray that I have the ability to do that. I have the right to choose how I want to transition, if that happens. It is something I think about. It is something I envision.

I have shared it with my closest friends. I am extremely methodical and I like putting things in order. And more than anything, I love my son very much. I don't want him to go through any unnecessary sadness or pain.

We didn't have a lot to say about how we got here. We should have autonomy in our decisions about how we leave.

To join our mission, email Amanda Cavanaugh at acavanaugh@compassionandchoices.org.

